

# International Agribusiness Center

Weekly Country Report, November 2-6, 2020

*Compiled by Lindsey Sarbacker, Food Export Intern - IABC*



## **USDA/Global Agricultural Information Network Reports**

Denmark Struggling with COVID-19 Prevalence in its Mink Industry - [link](#)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) infections are spreading rapidly among Danish mink farms. As of November 1, 2020, the Danish Veterinary Service reported 191 cases of the virus on Danish mink farms. In an attempt to stop the virus from spreading, the Danish Government has ordered the clearing of mink at all farms located within a radius of 7.8 km of an infected farm (bringing in another 209 farms). The 400 farms account for a little more than one-third of the Danish industry. Meanwhile, Danish politicians have varying positions on the future of mink production in the country. The Danish Government, however, believes that the sector is economically important and that there must still be a Danish mink industry after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Young Taiwan Consumers Say Cheers to Craft Beer - [link](#)

Taiwan imported a record 211 million liters of beer (1.8 million barrels) in 2019 with a corresponding value of \$197 million. Though industrial beer dominates over 98 percent of the market, imported and domestic craft beer enjoy a reported 50 percent annual revenue growth. Moreover, rapidly growing local craft beer are selling out on every retail shelf and the trend shows no sign of abating. This craft beer phenomenon provides export opportunities for American craft beer and U.S. ingredients, such as malted barley, yeast, and hops. Taiwan's craft beer market has many advantages, but market barriers include a lack of refrigeration (i.e. cold chain), education and awareness (on part of consumers and domestic brewers), and price sensitivity.

Portugal - Exports Continue to Fuel Expansion of the Portuguese Meat Sector - [link](#)

Portugal continues to expand its swine sector driven by increasing foreign demand, mainly from Asia. Since the opening of the Chinese market in 2019, China became the second largest export destination for Portuguese pork. In addition, during the first eight months of 2020, Portuguese live swine exports to Spain boomed due to tight Spanish hog supplies. The recent outbreak of African Swine Fever in Germany may distort the Portuguese live swine market with increasing competition from live hogs in Northern Europe. Meanwhile, Portuguese cattle production may continue expanding in response to higher international demand for live cattle. The temporary closure of the hospitality sector during the COVID-19 crisis is likely to discourage Portuguese chicken production in 2020 but it is expected to rebound in 2021.

Chile - Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional - [link](#)

This report provides an overview of the hotel, restaurant, and institutional food service (HRI) sector in Chile and outlines current market trends, including the best product prospects. The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on the Chilean HRI sector as international travel to Chile and sanitary restrictions forced the temporary and permanent closure of many HRI businesses. While the health crisis increased basic food and gourmet purchases online, there is still room for growth. Best product prospects categories are pork, poultry, beer, dairy products, beef, condiments, and sauces. Post recommends U.S. exporters to participate in Post led marketing activities, including @SaborUSA Chile social media marketing campaign, and join the Sabor USA Chile Virtual Trade Event slated for December 2, 2020.



Hong Kong Filed A Complaint to the WTO Against the US - [link](#)

On October 30, 2020, Hong Kong officially filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization's dispute unit against the United States on the subject of the United States' new labelling arrangement, which requires Hong Kong products to be labeled as "Made in China".

China - Virtual Agricultural Marketing and Business Meetings - Lessons Learned - [link](#)

Virtual business engagements have taken on new importance in 2020. Our initial experiences with food and agricultural trade shows, marketing events, and conferences yielded interesting lessons. While virtual spaces are good alternatives to in-person events for keeping contacts engaged and buyers interested, it remains difficult to engage people's senses, like tasting samples at a trade show can, or spur the kinds of chance meetings that make conferences so valuable. We suggest that organizers carefully consider their audience when planning a virtual engagement. This report contains a discussion on the lessons learned, additional recommendations, and six-step action plan for virtual engagement.

Netherlands - Food Service Establishments Largely Remain Closed Until December 2020 - [link](#)

On October 27, 2020, in an effort to contain the rising number of coronavirus (COVID-19) infections in the Netherlands, the Dutch Government decided that foodservice-HRI outlets will remain closed until, at least, early December. Restaurants' kitchens will only remain open for take-away and home-delivery of meals. In addition to the existing support measures, the government offered an additional \$47 million in financial support for the foodservice-HRI sector. The Dutch hotel, restaurant, and catering (HORECA) industry organization, Koninklijke Horeca Nederland (or KHN), commented that while the financial support is welcome, the subsidy might come too late for the industry as members are already struggling to pay bills, salaries, and rent.

The 2020 Dutch Seafood Industry Report – [link](#)

The Netherlands is one of Europe's leading importers and exporters of seafood products. The United States was the Netherlands' 14th largest supplier of seafood in 2019, totaling 23,000 MT or two percent of Dutch imports. Trade was dominated by imports of frozen Alaska Pollock (AP) which represented 76 percent of seafood trade from the United States. Seafood consumption in the Netherlands, estimated at 21 kg per person, is slowly growing due to a larger assortment in supermarkets and product innovation by seafood companies. Products that have a sustainability label and a story to tell have a competitive advantage in the Dutch consumer market. There are growth opportunities for U.S. exporters of seafood in the Dutch seafood processing industry and food retail sector, but short-term trade may be hampered by the coronavirus' impact on the Dutch foodservice HRI industry.

### **Food Processing Magazine**

Cornell to Study COVID in Food Plants - [link](#)

Cornell University has received a \$1 million grant from the USDA to study COVID-19 transmission among workers in food processing facilities. The study will partner with food processing companies to determine what can be done to mitigate transmission of infectious disease. It "will use computer modeling and outreach to find optimal strategies to minimize COVID-19 cases and transmission among workers in food processing facilities, while maintaining the best possible production," according to a Cornell handout. Researchers will work with Tyson Foods, Great Lakes Cheese, Seneca Foods, Del Monte and other big names across product segments.

*Disclaimer: This list is by no means complete, for more information please refer to the links above.*

## **Specialty Foods Magazine**

OSHA Cites Companies for COVID-Related Violations - [link](#)

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited two more food plants for coronavirus violations, reports *Food Dive*. A JBS facility in Green Bay, Wisconsin, was cited for having employees working in too close proximity and was fined \$13,494. The second, a Conagra Brands facility in Marshall, Missouri, was also cited for a record-keeping violation and fined \$2,121.

OSHA has cited 112 establishments across various industries for coronavirus-related violations since the pandemic began, including four food and meat plants. Total proposed fines equal \$1,603,544.

## **USDA Economic Research Service**

The COVID-19 Pandemic and Rural America - [link](#)

Recent county-level evidence on the prevalence of COVID-19 and local unemployment rates, while no means a complete picture, provides indication of the spread of the virus and ensuing economic recession across America (see the note on [data sources](#)).

The Meatpacking Industry in Rural America During the COVID-19 Pandemic - [link](#)

There was increased attention to the meatpacking industry recently as high rates of outbreaks of the coronavirus (COVID-19) caused some meatpacking plants to temporarily shut down. Just over 500,000 people work in the meatpacking industry in the United States. There are 56 counties in the United States—49 in rural (nonmetro) counties and 7 in urban (metro) counties—where meatpacking is estimated to account for more than 20 percent of all county employment. While these counties make up 2.5 percent of all rural counties and 0.6 percent of urban counties, they represent 19.0 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively, of all meatpacking employment in the United States.

## **China Weekly Skinny**

China's Dairy Boom - [link](#)

51% of Chinese respondents say they are buying more white (regular) milk than before, 34% are buying the same as before according to GlobalData. Apart from regular milk, Chinese consumers are also showing a preference for dairy products that have immune-boosting properties or reduced sugar content post-Covid.

China's New Cheese Rules Could Cultivate Market of Fromage Connoisseurs - [link](#)

The likely new national standard will mean that products that are made up of less than 50% of natural cheese can only be called 'cheese-based products', not cheese products. Previously food items that contained as little as 15% of cheese could be called cheese products. Few related products available in stores reveal their actual cheese content. Chinese people consume 100 grams of cheese per capita a year.

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Country reports were started in March 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

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